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Turnbull Government punishing women for daring to ask for a working life

The Turnbull Government is penalising working women with harsh policies that are gross infringements on women's workforce participation.

Every day, working women are being hit with a gender penalty made up of policies that disproportionately affect women.

The fronts on which the Turnbull Government is waging war with women range from penalty rates, paid parental leave and paid domestic violence leave to flexible workplaces, childcare, pay equity and dignity in retirement.

- Women will be disproportionately affected by slashing penalty rates. Women make up 54.7% of the accommodation and food services and 54.6 % of retail workforces, according to ABS data.
- Domestic Violence leave: Two-thirds of those that experience domestic violence each year are in paid employment.
- Pensions and retirement: On average women retire with approximately half the level of retirement savings of men. 70% of retired women rely on the pension as their main income source.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:

"Today, on International Women's Day, the Australian Council of Trade Unions is releasing a checklist of the ways the Turnbull Government is punishing female workers by denying them adequate working conditions that reflect contemporary life."

"The recent cuts to penalty rates are a standout issue where the Turnbull Government has turned its back on women in the workplace."

"Women are more likely to rely on penalty rates to meet household expenses and are more likely to be sole parents or on incomes of less than \$30,000, according to research by the Centre for Work and Life at the University of South Australia."

"Despite Minister for Women Michaelia Cash's assertions that she's working for women, her government's failure to make a submission to the Fair Work Commission on penalty rates, or the case still before the commission concerning Domestic Violence Leave, shows her lack of commitment."

ENDS

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See checklist below



CHECKLIST: TURNBULL GOVERNMENT'S ATTACKS ON WOMEN

	TRADE UNION TRACK RECORD	TURNBULL GOVERNMENT TRACK RECORD
1. PENALTY RATES	Unions are fighting to protect 700,000 low paid workers (the majority of whom are women) from cuts to Sunday and public holiday rates.	The Government support cuts to penalty rates in retail, hospitality, fastfood and other low-paid industries.
2. WORK / LIFE BALANCE	Unions are fighting for the right for parents and other carers to choose to work part-time.	The Government has done nothing to address the barriers to female workforce participation.
3. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	Unions are fighting for a minimum of 10 days paid domestic violence leave for all workers and properly funded front-line services to support survivors of violence.	The Government has eliminated DV leave for public sector workers, cut funding to community legal centres and plans to privatise rape and sexual assault counselling services.
4. PAID PARENTAL LEAVE	Unions won the right to 18 weeks PPL and continue to fight for 26 weeks plus superannuation for all working parents in line with international standards.	The Government plan to cut PPL by up to \$12,106 and stop workplace bargaining in relation to PPL. Over 70 000 working mothers will be disadvantaged.
5. PAY EQUITY	Unions are fighting to achieve higher wages for women through minimum wage increases, equal remuneration orders and workplace bargaining.	The Government plans to water down workplace laws that require employers to provide annual gender equality performance reports.
6. AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE	Unions are campaigning for investment in early education and care to be increased to 1% of GDP and decent wages and conditions for childhood educators.	The Government is holding families hostage by making the \$3 billion childcare package contingent on cuts to PPL and family payments.
7. SECURE JOBS	Unions are fighting for the right for long-term casuals to voluntarily become permanent employees.	The Government has done nothing to address the rapid growth of insecure work.
8. DIGNITY IN RETIREMENT	Unions are campaigning for improvements to the superannuation and pensions system to provide economic security for women in retirement.	The Government has cut access to the age pension. The pension provides the main source of retirement income for 70% of women.
9. INCOME SUPPORT PAYMENTS	Unions continue to fight against proposed cuts to child support and other government payments that assist disadvantaged women.	The Government has slashed 1.6 million in family payments. They plan to abolish FTB payments for sole parents with older children and end of year supplements for over a million families.
10. PUBLIC SERVICES	Unions are fighting for properly funded public services and reforms that ensure multinationals and wealthy individuals contribute their fair share.	The Government continues to pursue cuts to health care and other public services. These cuts disproportionately impact on women.